

HOGAN & HARTSON
L.L.P.

ORIGINAL

DAVID L. SIERADZKI
PARTNER
(202) 837-8482
DLSIERADZKI@HHLAW.COM

COLUMBIA SQUARE
555 THIRTEENTH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004-1109
TEL (202) 637-5600
FAX (202) 637-5910
WWW.HHLAW.COM

March 19, 2003

RECEIVED

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

MAR 19 2003

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service,
CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On October 15, 1998, Western Wireless Corp. ("Western Wireless") filed a Petition for Clarification or Rulemaking in this docket, seeking clarification or rule changes to minimize the time lag between the date on which competitive eligible telecommunications carriers ("CETCs") submit information on the lines they serve and the date on which support begins to be disbursed. Western Wireless pointed out that the rules then in effect imposed a significantly longer "lag" on CETCs than on incumbent local exchange carriers ("ILECs"), which significantly delayed CETCs' ability to receive support and violated the Commission's principle of competitive neutrality.

The Commission has effectively granted the relief sought in Western Wireless' petition. On November 2, 1999, the Commission released the *Ninth Report and Order* in this docket, 14 FCC Rcd 20432, which (among other things) modified the reporting requirements with respect to non-rural ILECs and CETCs operating in their areas in a manner that substantially reduced this 'lag' and made it the same for ILECs and CETCs. In doing so, the Commission cited Western Wireless' petition. *Id.* at ¶ 92 n. 245. On May 23, 2001, the Commission released the *Fourteenth Report and Order* in this docket, 16 FCC Rcd 11244, which (among other things) implemented comparable changes to the reporting requirements for rural ILECs and CETCs operating in their areas, and in effect granted the same relief.

11/11/01 Copies rec'd
11/11/01 JDE

012

Marlene H. Dortch

March 19, 2003

Page 2

Since the Commission has already fully granted the relief sought in Western Wireless' petition, no further Commission action in response to the petition is required, and Western Wireless would be **willing** to withdraw it.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Sieradzki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David L. Sieradzki
Counsel for Western Wireless Corp

cc: William Scher